

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-15 RSC-01

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R 101205Z OCT 73

FM AMCONSUL IZMIR

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMCONSUL ADANA

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E.O. 11652 TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: ECEVIT DRAWS BIG CROWD IN IZMIR

SUMMARY: WEEKEND OCT 5-7 THREE MAJOR POLITICAL RALLIES HELD IN IZMIR. DP RALLY UNIMPRESSIVE, JP RALLY GAVE LITTLE COMFORT TO ITS SUPPORTERS, WHILE LARGE AND ANIMATED RPP GATHERING WON RALLY SWEEPSTAKES BY A WIDE MARGIN. IF CROWDS MEANT VOTES, RPP WOULD WIN BIG. LOCAL JP CONCERNED BY ECEVIT'S SUCCESS AND ARE MORE GUARDED IN THEIR PREDICTIONS OF VICTORY. END SUMMARY.

1. OVER WEEKEND IZMIR WAS SCENE OF SPEECHES BY LEADERS OF THREE POLITICAL PARTIES. OCT 5. EX-PRESIDENT BAYAR CAME TO TOWN TO BEAT DRUMS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY. UNFORTUNATELY FOR DP, BAYAR IS MORE EFFECTIVE IN PRINT THAN IN PERSON. OF NEARLY 3,000 PRERSONS PRESENT WHEN BAYAR BEGAN HALTING, RAMBLING SPEECH, AT LEAST ONE-THIRD HAD LEFT BEFORE HE STOPPED TALKING 90 MINUTES LATER. BY THAT TIME IT WAS TOO LATE FOR YOUNGER, MORE DYNAMIC SPEAKERS TO RESTORE ENTHUSIASM AND RALLY FIZZLED.

2. JUSTICE PARTY BROUGHT ITS CHAIRMAN SULEYMAN DEMIREL TO IZMIR OCT 6. A CROWD OF 10,000 GATHERED TO HEAR DEMIREL GIVE A VARIATION OF HIS STANDARD

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CAMPAIGN SPEECH. THIS VERSION WAS PRIMARILY AN

APOLOGIA FOR HIS DECISION TO RESIGN MARCH 12, 1971. ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE NATURE OF SPEECH COMBINED WITH DEMIREL'S RATHER COLORLESS PLATFORM STYLE PRODUCED A DRAB RALLY. DURING ENTIRE SPEECH DEMIREL WAS INTERRUPTED BY APPLAUSE NO MORE THAN FIVE TIMES.

3. ON SUNDAY OCT 7 REPUBLICAN PEOPLES PARTY CHAIRMAN BULENT ECEVIT RETURNED TO IZMIR FOR HIS SECOND APPEARANCE OF CAMPAIGN. RPP LOCAL ORGANIZATION HAD OBVIOUSLY GONE ALL OUT TO PRODUCE PARTY FAITHFUL BUT TREMENDOUS SIZE OF CROWD SURPRISED EVEN RPP ORGANIZERS. RALLY TOOK PLACE IN SAME LOCATION AS DEMIREL'S HAD THE PREVIOUS DAY. CROWD WAS AT LEAST 4 OR 5 TIMES AS LARGE AND MAY WELL HAVE BEEN LARGER. LOCAL OBSERVERS DESCRIBED CROWD AS BIGGEST TURNOUT IN IZMIR FOR A POLITICAL LEADER SINCE THE DAYS OF MENDERES.

4. ECEVIT, OBVIOUSLY ELATED BY THE CROWD, DELIVERED A FIERY VERSION OF HIS STANDARD CAMPAIGN SPEECH. HIS ATTACKS AGAINST JP AND DEMIREL FOR EVASION OF RESPONSIBILITY (FOR MARCH 1971/CRISIS, FOR RAPIDLY RISING COST OF LIVING, ETC.) SEEMED TO STRIKE PARTICULARLY RESPONSIVE CHORD AMONG YOUTHFUL AUDIENCE WHO CONTINUALLY INTERRUPTED SPEECH WITH APPLAUSE AND CHEERS.

5. COMMENT: IF CROWDS WERE DIRECTLY TRANSLATABLE INTO VOTES ECEVIT WOULD TAKE IZMIR IN A LANDSLIDE. HOWEVER, IN 1969 INONU CLIMAXED HIS CAMPAIGN IN IZMIR AND RECEIVED A TUMULTOUS RECEPTION BUT TWO DAYS LATER THE RPP RECEIVED A RESOUNDING DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF THE VOTERS. NEVERTHELESS THE ABILITY OF ECEVIT TO ATTRACT A CROWD -- AND OF THE RPP ORGANIZATION TO GENERATE ONE-- CANNOT BE LIGHTLY BRUSHED ASIDE. CERTAINLY LOCAL JP LEADERS ARE NOT DISCOUNTING ECEVIT'S SHOWING. THEY ARE EXTREMELY CONCERNED, NOT ONLY BY HIS SUCCESS BUT BY THE FAILURE OF DEMIREL TO MOUNT AN EXCITING, EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN. ONE MEASURE OF THIS CONCERN IS APPEARANCE OCT 10 IN IZMIR'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER, YENI ASIR, OF FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL WARNING THAT RPP IS HARBORING ALL SORTS OF EXTREME LEFTISTS WHO ARE IN LARGE PART RESPONSIBLE FOR SIZE OF CROWDS ECEVIT IS DRAWING THROUGHOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNTRY. EDITORIAL PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY SINCE LOCAL JP-ORIENTED PAPERS, YENI ASIR AND EKSPRES, HAVE UNTIL NOW BEEN FAIRLY EVEN-HANDED IN THEIR TREATMENT OF VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES. LOCAL COFFEE HOUSE PUNDITS WHO UNTIL NOW HAVE PREDICTED JP WOULD WIN HEALTHY MAJORITY ARE NOW TALKING ABOUT COALITION POSSIBILITIES.

6. THE TURKS OF THE AEGEAN, WHO SEEM TO THRIVE ON

CERTAINTY, ARE NOW VERY UNCERTAIN AND UNEASY ABOUT
WHAT THIS ELECTION WILL BRING. NEVERTHELESS, DESPITE
ECEVIT'S RECENT SHOWING, COMPLICATING PRESENCE OF
DP, RR, AND NSP, AND DEMIREL'S LACKLUSTER CAMPAIGN,
JP REMAINS FRONT RUNNER IN THIS CONSULAR DISTRICT
WHICH, ALTHOUGH MORE CONSERVATIVE THAN THE NATION
AS A WHOLE, HAS ALWAYS BEEN A RELIABLE POLITICAL
WEATHERVANE. EXTENT OF JP MARGIN MAY NOT BE WHAT
JP WANTS AND NEEDS TO HELP IT ESTABLISH A STRONG
GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER. REGARDLESS OF WHO WINS, ONE
OF MOST NOTABLE LONG TERM RESULT OF CAMPAIGN MAY
WELL BE THAT ECEVIT HAS ESTABLISHED HIMSELF AS A
CREDIBLE POLITICAL FIGURE IN AEGEAN REGION.

SMITH

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